

## ABSTRACT

A system and method for controlling access to digital content, including streaming media. The system includes a web server, media server and end user processor, such as a personal computer, coupled to a network. The web server cryptographically generates a ticket in response to an end user's request for access to a file. The ticket is based, at least in part, on a time at or near when the ticket is generated. The media server generates an authorization ticket, preferably using the same cryptographic algorithm as the web server. The media server authorization ticket is based, at least in part, on a time at or near when the media server receives the request for access to the file. The media server determines whether to grant access to the file by comparing the ticket, as generated by the web server, to the ticket, as generated by the media server.